

Since the publication of the first edition of Dr. Mitchell's work in 1877, his treatment of certain resistant and perplexing cases with rest and excessive feeding, together with isolation, electricity, and massage, has become widely known, and either in its entirety or with some modification has been extensively practised. It has been set forth in a translation in French, and has in England found an earnest advocate and upholder in Dr. Playfair, the title of whose pamphlet has been given above. It consists of two articles published in the *Lancet* several years ago, and an address upon the subject delivered before the Medical Section of the British Medical Association at Worcester, August 9, 1882. He indicates Dr. Mitchell's claims for originality in this systematic treatment of nerve prostration and hysteria, and cites a number of cases in his own practice of wonderful cure thereby.

Dr. Mitchell's revised edition gives additional hints to the carrying out of his treatment, answers some adverse criticisms, devotes some space to the treatment of obesity, the use of milk as a diet and its effect on excretions.

It seems strange that Dr. Mitchell should find it necessary to defend his views from adverse criticism. If his method of treatment rescued but one poor creature from the chains of hopeless invalidism it would be worthy of high commendation ; but coming as it does to a class of cases which taxes the ingenuity and patience of the physician to the uttermost, it will be welcomed, as it has been in the past, as one of the measures to try when ordinary methods fail.

GRACE PECKHAM.

**Recherches Cliniques et Thérapeutiques sur l'Épilepsie, l'Hystérie, et l'Idiotie.** By Drs. BOURNEVILLE, E. BONNAIRE, et WUILLAMIÉ. Paris : A. Delahaye et Lecroisner, 1882.

The present volume is a species of report of Dr. Bourneville's service at the Bicêtre. It contains the improvements devised and desired in his service. It appears that a male nurse committed pæderasty with seven of the idiots ; to three of whom he communicated syphilis. The nurse was sent to state prison with hard labor for twelve years, and was to be obliged to remain for ten years under the surveillance of the police after his discharge. It seems curious that a chronic alcoholic, as this nurse was, should have been appointed to such a position. The second part, "Notes and Observations on Idiocy," contains some interestingly reported cases of "tuberous sclerosis," meningo-encephalitis,

among idiots, together with remarks on microcephaly. A case of hystero-epilepsy in a thirteen-year-old boy is reported. A case of locomotor ataxia, with interesting complications, is here detailed at length. Cases of hemiplegia, idiopathic epilepsy, and epileptic dementia, and the description of an epidemic of measles, are then given. The book is well issued, but its value is not easily settled.

**Lectures on Diseases of the Nervous System.** Delivered at Guy's Hospital by SAMUEL WILKS, M.D. Second edition. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son, & Co., 1883. Pp. 602, \$6.00.

The basis of Dr. Wilks' work on the diseases of the nervous system, was a series of lectures delivered in 1868 as part of a course on general medicine. These lectures were much amplified, and in the present edition have been changed so as to adapt them as much as possible to the requirements of modern pathology. Dr. Wilks, in his two prefaces, makes explanations which to a great extent disarm criticism. His book is not put forth as a systematic treatise on nervous diseases, but rather as a clinical work for the practical instruction of the physician. It is, as he confesses, faulty in arrangement, and it is now somewhat old-fashioned in its nomenclature, and occasionally incorrect in its pathology—as where he states that in lead paralysis no lesion of the spinal cord has yet been found.

Dr. Wilks makes a plea for a clinical rather than patho-anatomical nomenclature of nervous diseases; and his plea was a strong one fifteen years ago. But this is not the case now.

To those who already have some acquaintance with the pathology of the nervous system, Dr. Wilks' work will be found both interesting and useful. The author gives the results of a wide observation and careful study of nervous diseases. He has the advantage also of writing from the standpoint of a general practitioner, and in these days when it is the fashion to sneer at the narrowness of specialists, we must suppose this to lend particular value to the work. It follows, however, that while we can heartily recommend Dr. Wilks' book to the specialist and even to the general practitioner, it is certainly not a safe guide for the medical student, or the best book for any one to begin with in studying the class of diseases of which it treats.

It is hardly worth while to call attention to the peculiarities and defects upon which we base this opinion. A very superficial reading will reveal the efforts which have been made to twist old